

No doubt about it, Medicaid is under threat. In light of the fiscal crisis, there are serious efforts to make Medicaid a block grant to the states or otherwise threaten health care and services to people with developmental and other disabilities, including home and community-based services.

It is urgent for as many people as possible to contact their own Senators and Congressman/woman. Call 1-888-876-6242—which will get you to the U.S. Capitol Switchboard. Tell the operator your state and ask to be connected to one of your two Senators. Call back and ask for your other Senator. Call a third time and ask for your Congressman/woman.

To identify your Senators, click on your state at

http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

To identify your Congressman/woman, go to <http://www.house.gov/> and enter your zip code. Some districts require a 9 digit zip code, which you can find at <http://zip4.usps.com/zip4/welcome.jsp>

Better yet, over the 4th of July, most Senators and Congressmen/women will be at home and participating in public events. You can contact their offices and ask where they will be appearing. Go and introduce yourself.

The message is simple

- Identify yourself and your home town, so the staffer you speak with will know you are a constituent who has the power to vote in your state/district.
- Tell the staff person how essential Medicaid is for people with developmental and other disabilities. Add that it is cost effective to provide home and community-based services rather than pay for people to live in a nursing home or other institution. There better ways to balance the budget.